



STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

MOLLY M. SPEARMAN
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION

Dear Florence Four Staff, Students, Families, and Community:

In March of 2016, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) began providing intensive support to Florence School District Four. In May of 2018, a state of emergency was declared in Florence School District Four and the SCDE took over operations of the district to improve the quality of instruction and student achievement, increase the number of high school career development opportunities, stabilize staff turnover rates, streamline expenditures and produce a clear financial audit, as well as implement needed facility improvements.

We are very proud of the growth in each of those areas. Teachers have participated in numerous professional development opportunities, students have shown growth in achievement in English language arts and mathematics at the elementary and middle level, and high school students are receiving career and technology opportunities and certifications. The district has successfully submitted required audits and cleared findings of non-compliance in federal grant programs.

Although there have been positive changes, I feel a tremendous responsibility to set a course of action that will provide stronger educational opportunities for all students in the Florence School District Four for years to come. It is extremely difficult for districts smaller than 1,000 students, to successfully operate financially and programmatically. The administration costs alone take away dramatically from dollars that should be going to teachers and students in the classroom. Students suffer from the lack of course offerings, career development programs, and limited extra-curricular activities.

With those challenges and the goal to offer every child in Florence School District Four a strong educational pathway for individual success, it is my decision that the Florence School District Four be consolidated with Florence One School District effective July 1, 2022. At the same time, the Timmonsville High School would be retired and students of the high school attend appropriate high schools within Florence School District One. The building will continued to be used for the middle school and elementary school and possibly for other community needs in the future. In addition, a transition committee representing both Florence Four and Florence One will be appointed immediately in consultation with the local legislative delegation.

I will devote myself to work with you to make this restructuring a strong foundation for the educational future of all children in these communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Molly M. Spearman".

Molly M. Spearman
State Superintendent of Education